

By Richard Cobb

The bacchanals were the first to go; but their disappearance was not happily disastrous, as they were the only persons really to be pitied, although a cluster of electric globes, such as decorated the Round Point on the Concord, was allowing Parisians to retain the character as a city of pleasure. The young *parvenues*, most of them under thirty, being as usual, unpolitical as they were virtually blind to anything of small and transient importance, found no particular excitement in a post which had the importance of being above internationality. The *parapetennes* had to go, and were suggested to be sent to the *garçons* of the *cafés*. But they were regarded as a thoroughly unpleasant class, and it was only with reluctance that they were sent to the

The motor lobby all at once acquired a vast knowledge of tree diseases, illustrating a touching concern for the pedestrian, who, in all other respects, was likely literally to be driven to the wall in the plantaginous plans that were elaborating in the secrecy of the *café-salons*, in the small print of municipal *arrêtés*, for the future shape of the city. Many of the chestnuts that so old as to be dangerous; many of the oaks that a branch had nearly fallen on, and which while the occasional September or October gale would oblige with dramatic proof of such hazards. The pedestrian must be protected from the trees, as much as from the cars. So by the initiative of the Second World War, the tree-operation was already under way. Parisians as perceptive as the Marquis de Ferrières, who, in 1789, had been quick to draw his conclusions from the chalk marks on certain trees in the Boulevard de la Reine in Versailles and had decided that the Pelicans

Every September since 1955 has witnessed the steady massacre of trees, on squares, avenues and boulevards, place de l'Estrapade, place Saint-Sulpice, boulevard Raspail, avenue du Maine, parvis Notre-Dame, and so on. Many were destroyed in the course of the construction of the various underground parkings that have since, perhaps as an unconscious tribute to the continuity of a Parisian history of which the young technocrats are so joyfully ignorant, become the terrain of growing *râdeux* shrews

which corresponded to similar movements in the 1870s and the early 1920s. Most of the new arrivals were either bachelors, many of them drawn to small hotels with provincial names (Hôtel de Nantes and so on) or young couples, often with children. During the terrible winter of 1955-56, an unknown num-

July, 1958, was a terrible year for Paris; for it was then that was voted, at least in principle, the removal of the Hôtes to somewhere in the southern suburbs, and their replacement by one of several projects as yet to be adopted (a communist town councillor, at the time, suggested that the central markets should be replaced by the Smith-

et pousseur, aux 12 coups
midi qu'égrenait sur une chemise
une horloge d'Empire." De Gaulle
he realizes, is indifferent to Paris

In a more immediate political context, it is also a reminder of the excellent record, over the past

By Rayner Heppenstall

L'Invité de Nogent
336pp. Paris : Grasset, 42fr.



M Reumaux does make a few attempts at describing the scenes of the various crimes, all, it is clear, carefully planned and methodically carried out with great speed. This thus forms some impression of the neighbourhoods of a conurbated area through which most of us have only travelled by train, Uniformly, M Reumaux also takes upon himself to say at what point in each operation the killer erects and ejaculated, thus adding his own misfe to rumour.

10

from a Chinook myth

He ate the feathers of seabirds and fishscales,
 He ate the turn on the shore, he ate seafoam,
 He ate the gray and white daylight of winter.
 He ate the North wind, and out of his thin bare shoulders
 He sprouted gray and white things. Now he was Seagull.
 He stood in the mouth of the river. "Feed me!" he shouted.
 The Seagull turned his head for humans for humans.
 And plucked the eyes of the cracked them and ate them.
 And he ate the eyes and broke to many pieces
 And he ate the eyes and broke to many pieces
 And he ate the eyes and broke to many pieces

David Wagoner

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The sensibility of the garden

By John Gage

JOHN DIXON HUNT:
The Figure in the Landscape
Poetry, Painting, and Gardening
During the Eighteenth Century
271pp. Johns Hopkins University
Press. £12.

It is an irony of cultural history that the most novel and the most characteristic art-form of the eighteenth century, which more than any other engaged the thoughts and energies of eighteenth-century men and women, should have been the garden. The garden, which should be the one least accessible to posterity. With very few exceptions—Rousham and Stourhead notable among them—the landscape gardens of the eighteenth century have been swept away or remade out of existence, and in modern times they have generally been studied rather as an aspect of philosophy or literature than of visual or material art. The focus has generally been on the garden as a platform for political propaganda—the Whiggish liberalism of the Burlington circle—or as an aesthetic prelude to that taste for "natural" landscape which has been presumed to prevail in Romantic poetry and painting.

But, in *The Figure in the Landscape*, John Dixon Hunt explores gardening and the landscape as mental phenomena, what he calls "the psychological extensions of landscape space". In a subtle exposition of the gardening interests of Marvell, Pope, Thomson and Gray, he suggests that developments in the garden are a paradigm of the developing poetic mind, and especially of that mind as more expansively conscious of its own creative powers. These developments are summarized in a concluding chapter, which moves from "prospect poetry" to the more introspective treatment of landscape in Goldsmith and Cowper. This crucial outline hardly does justice to Mr. Hunt's breadth of reading and reference in the literature of visual art, but this reading is ancillary to the central poetic theme; although it is illustrated by seventy-five plates, many of them freshly chosen and all of them functional, this is a book which is surprisingly little to do with landscape gardening or painting themselves.

A few years ago, in an anthology of garden literature gathered, with Peter Willis, under the title *The Genius of the Place*, Mr. Hunt sought to unite three Horaces. Walpole called the "Three New Graces" who dress and adorn Nature, namely poetry, painting, and gardening; and he succeeded brilliantly in his new book he has set himself a far more hermetic task, and although he offers a good deal which will interest critics of English literature, he has missed the opportunity of showing how the language combined in a new way to create the series of landscapes which fascinated several generations of poets.

A literary conception of imagination is here made the touchstone of value; although the preface rebuts the idea that Mr. Hunt's view of the progress of landscape sensibility might be teleological, time and again we sense the Romanticist writing to set things right. Thus the "emblematic" hortus conclusus of the romantic garden, which is the "ideal" of the eighteenth century, is felt to be a somewhat superficial development, albeit an important stage in the growing roll for a larger nature beyond the confines of the garden. Mr. Hunt is puzzled that theory should run ahead of practice, that each generation should identify its "natural" what seemed to be successors to be absurdly contrived. It is something of a shock to recall that the celebrated remark, "he leaped the fence and saw that all nature was given", was applied by Walpole to William Kent. Yet this discrepancy is surely not peculiar to the history of gardening; it reflects a distinction between verbal language and non-verbal experience which is inherent in the study of the sister arts. We are dealing with a number of intersecting languages, each with its proper syntax. Thus, in a discussion of

Wright of Derby's portrait of the Duke of Devonshire, where the reclining figure looks out placidly from a damp and leafy dell, while his gloved fingers fidget with a manuscript of Rousseau, Hunt writes:

Apart from the word "Rousseau" on Boothby's book, there is nothing in the painting which requires our verbal or literary participation. Boothby's solitary reflexion, in a garden whose apparatus of inscription, iconography, and iconography, is provided by the Muses, provides a vocabulary for his thoughts.

But this is clearly not so: Boothby's melancholic gesture, his studied *déshabille* and equally studied rural setting are part of another, but no less specific or traditional vocabulary of visual symbolism than Claude's. The painting owes its interest chiefly to the quality of Wright's observation, for his sitor is in the grip of the same sort of visual cliché as the painters who cluster round the dashing waterfall in a watercolour by Reynolds also illustrated in the book—a cliché which, according to the Burkean aesthetic adopted by Hunt, should have been exclusive to solitude. It is notable that in a view of a similar fall in Yorkshire, engraved shortly before the appearance of Burke's *Philosophical Enquiry*, the several visitors are paying scant attention to the spectacle which, in total disregard of the Burkean terminology, is described in the caption as a Beautiful & Romantic Natural Cascade.

The problems attending too rigid a juxtaposition of verbal and visual languages may be illustrated in two passages quoted in different contexts by Mr. Hunt, from poems by James Thomson and his patron George Lyttelton. An extract addressed to Lyttelton from Thomson's *Spring* runs:

Meanwhile you gain the height, from whose fair brow
The bursting prospect spreads
And, snatched o'er hill and dale,
And verdant field, and darkening trees,
And villages embosomed soft,
And spire towns by surging columns
Of household smoke, your eye excur-
Wide-stretching from the Hall in
The hospitable Genius lingers still,
To where the broken landscape, by
Ascending, roughens into rugged hills
O'er which the Cambrian mountains,
That skirt the blue horizon, dusky
rise.

"The whole prospect passage borrows its grammar of patterns and structures" writes Mr. Hunt, "from the dynamic imagery and the bird's-eye view seen a good deal closer to Momper or Brill, and is so much the worse for it; yet it is precisely the energy of the passage which robs it of pictorialness: the 'bursting prospect' scratches the eye, the towns are marked by 'surging' columns, the terrain itself ascends and roughens."

It is an experience of landscape entirely foreign to cabinet painting the Claudean type, an experience which began to be recreated in visual terms only with the introduction of moving spectacles like Louthborough's *Biographical* and Turner or the series of painted landscapes becomes the leading actor in its own drama. Far more purely Claudean, more static and picturesque are Lyttelton's own *Spring* passages.

Of verdant meads and cultivated fields,
Through these a river rolls its
winding flood,
Adorn'd with various tufts of rising
Here, half conceal'd in trees, a
cottage stands;
A castle there the opening plain
commands;
Beyond, a town with glittering
And distant hills the wide horizon
bound.

Since they are so exclusively pic-

torial, they offer no challenge to the landscape they have no power to stimulate as Thomson so conspicuously stimulated the landscape painters of the Romantic generation.

Mr. Hunt's disapproval of what he identifies as the pictorial elements in poetry prevents him from assessing convincingly their development in painting and the garden. In his final chapter he suggests that the collaboration of the three arts broke down during the last quarter of the eighteenth century, as poets and painters sought stronger landscape stimuli outside the garden. This does not really seem to be the picture. In the early years of the following century Cole, Beare and Beaumont at Cole Orton were reviving the emblematic style of gardening with new buildings, monuments and inscriptions; and they impressed their respective protégés Turner and Constable with the



"Boer Sharpshooters near Ladysmith." by Johann Nepomuk Schönbeger, Sphere, May 5, 1900. Posing as the representative of a German paper at the Boer headquarters, Schönbeger returned with dispatches until his cover was blown by a telegram from the Sphere which ended, "London requests you to remain".

Front linesmen

By William Beaver

PAT HODGSON:
The War Illustrators
191pp. Osprey. £5.95.

If the boom in military books does not worry observers, it ought to, it ought to be a ready market is found for books on accoutrements, battles, and the colourful aspects of establishing the Pax Britannica, but it is somewhat worrying when more than an equal sale is found for books, filled with lurid illustrations, on Nazi Germany.

The War Illustrators, however, is a book of value and general interest. By the 1850s advances in mass printing techniques allowed for the comparatively easy reproduction of sketches by "special" war artists in the Illustrated papers which flourished with universal literacy. The illustrators vied with each other to employ not only the best artists but to be the first to publish their drawings. When the final push towards the headwaters of the Nile got under way in 1896, the *Daily Graphic* employed natives to wrap the fresh dispatches of the march to Wad down the Nile and then swim a journey of sixty miles at twelve shillings a trip.

The drawings the messengers transmitted to a waiting London like hundreds of others from the Balkans to Burma, were the work of some of the finest Victorian artists. Indeed, Walter Paget, Winslow Homer, the Waugh brothers, René Bull, Johann Schönbeger, Howard Chandler Christy conveyed in one hurried sketch so much action that their work is more like



"How the Daily Graphic sketches were sent down the Nile" (detail), by W. T. Maud.

the brutal realism of television-art than the still photographs in the intervening years after the South African War.

Reintroducing in *The War Illustrators* this forceful and neglected aspect of Victorian art, Pat Hodgson has collected 120 examples and presents them like an exhibition: (mostly British and American) and a catalogue-like explanation of depicted events. The book is both interesting and useful, though clearer reproduction would be desirable. Schönbeger's detail, and a brief sketch of a full page drawing, the brief description of the

marks" which, according to Reynolds, were fleshed out by forms by the spectator himself. The "image made by chance" which had been restated by the son in a gardening context in the century, and given a systematic gloss and fashionably currency by Alexander Cozens, Reynolds did not say that reading Gainsborough was an imagination act, simply that it was a matter of viewing distance; he was applying Horace's principle of *ut pictura poesis*: some poems, like some pictures, are best seen close to, other from far away.

This is a handsome and thoroughly readable book. The discussion is confined to England, and it would have been helpful to have the sources of the many valuable illustrations, especially as some of the more subtle and inadequate and, like the text, perpetuates a mystery "William Beckwith".

Through the mangle

By Alan Bell

NICOLAS BARKER (Editor):
The Early Life of James McBey
An Autobiography 1883-1911
131pp. Oxford University Press.
£5.50.

The slim, uncompleted autobiography of a rather out-of-favour Scottish artist may not seem to promise any great literary excitement, but *The Early Life of James McBey* is original and impressive. The text has been sympathetically edited by Nicolas Barker, who was originally interested as a biographer in McBey's collections of old etching paper but divined the special quality of the manuscript, and the book has been beautifully produced by the Oxford University Press.

The text fully deserves the care it has received, being the remarkable story told with a naive skill and precision, of how (in the words of the foreword) "a naive talent of exceptional strength was discovered and self-taught, and finally broke out of the shackles of ignorance and an unsupportable background".

A view of the sands

By Reyner Banham

JOHN C. VAN DYKE:
The Desert
Facsimile Reprint of 1903 Edition
Introduction by Lawrence Clark Powell
249pp. Tucson: Arizona Historical Society/Arizona Silhouettes. \$10.

Who is this connoisseur—not to say snob—of atmosphere, who will bid you observe how dense is the atmosphere at sunset between the Alps and the dome of St Peter's, then complains that the same thick air is all over Europe, the Mediterranean, Mesopotamia, the Ganges, disdainfully observes that it "has been breathed and burned and butte smoked for ten thousand years" and compares it unfavourably to the "clear and scentless... absolutely intangible" air of Montana, and finally puts down the colours of the Venetian atmosphere as "artificial, a chemical colour, caused by the decay of stone, wood and iron torn from the neighbouring mountains"?

Obviously an American, and with a kind of cult readership in America since the early 1900s, I myself joined the faithful on discovering a copy of *The Desert* in a library. It is a book of a kind and reading half of it at a sitting (or, rather, standing, propped against the linen-shelves under a naked lampbulb). I resolved (after several months of heart-searching) to read it on the next visit, and discovered that some less bescrippled desert-freak had got there first. This facsimile reprint will be a service to the cult, but should also bring John C. van Dyke's aerial vision and chromatic sensibilities to the wider public he may deserve.

Van Dyke, historian and well-travelled aristocrat of the older type, was raised in Minnesota and knew the high plains well before committing his life to the Sage Library at Rutgers. In 1898, at the age of forty-two, he went to the Western deserts for relief of his asthma, acquiring a malaria instead, and applied his trained Russian eye to a vast stretch of territory from the Mojave in California to Guaymas in Mexico, and across to Tucson in Arizona. He detected from the start that to write a book on the deserts, and mailed the manuscript back to Scribner's from Del Rio, Texas, in May 1901.

What makes the result so compelling is its visual accuracy, and command of a language for describing colour and light. What held one transfixed among the lines was a classic shock of recognition; here, for the first time in literature, was the full range of desert scenery as only one who has been there can know it, rendered verbally with a truthfulness and

with a simplicity affected neither by nostalgia nor loathing, both of which would have been easy and understandable.

His boyhood as the bastard son of a blacksmith's daughter in the coastal agricultural community of Buchanan seems to have affinities in bleakness and bitter local wisdom with the poetry of Robin Flower's *Blacket Islands*, and American readers may find parallels with the Maine coast. McBey was born into a community in which the Tay Bridge disaster was seen as a retribution for Sunday travel, and where a crushed pinkie-finger was straightened by a tweak of the blacksmith's tongue. His existence was more unromantic than most. The father had flitted early and his mother, who was always known as "Annie", showed him no affection whatever, although life had thrown them together very closely. The small boy's having to leech his mother's temple to relieve the eye affliction which eventually blinded her recalls the young Gosse's vigils over his dying mother.

Black though this background was (and the American print-collector who commissioned the autobiography in 1947, when McBey was sixty-four, found it too stark to edit, and the book was eventually published in a revised edition, with the loving care of his grandmother

power to stimulate the eye of imagination which has not really been rivaled since.

Unfortunately, the reprint is being commended to the public chiefly on currently conventional eco-conservationist grounds, which is a pity, because Van Dyke's views on these subjects go little beyond the verge of the acceptable. In his observation of desert life must now seem rather less than remarkable—the chapter on the animals, for instance, has nothing to say about the ways of avoiding thermal disaster, and mystifies the sources of water. But show him a crag at sunset, the haze in a valley or the fall of light on salt and sand, and he is superb. The more extreme the effect to be communicated, the less ornate his prose:

This veil or sheet-cloud might be called a twilight cloud, giving out as it does its greatest splendour after the sun has disappeared below the verge. It then takes all colours with singular vividness. At times it will overspread the whole West as a sheet of brilliant magenta, but more frequently it blazes with scarlet, carmine, crimson, and finally dying out in a beautiful ashen of roses...

Or, thus, on the colour of sands: Lying quietly upon the earth they are usually a dull yellow. In the morning light they are often gray, at noon frequently a bleached yellow, and at sunset occasionally pink or after-hued. Wavering heat and mirage give them temporary colouring at times that is beautifully unreal. They then appear to undulate slightly like the smooth surface of a summer sea at sunset; and the colours shift and travel with the undulations...

As he rightly says, the sands are not "golden", except "when they are whirled high in the air by the winds, and then struck broadside by the sunlight".

Van Dyke was a rare type of witness of truth, but one may wonder whether his inspired fineness of vision is communicable to anyone who has not seen the deserts. (Or, at least, the famous coloured illustrations in that other cult-publication, the monthly *Arizona Highways*), in fact he can communicate that vision; this is observably true—but it may only be to those who have some touch of the older kind of aristocrat about them, and can follow him through the verbal niceties of "magenta", "scarlet", "carmine", "crimson", "ashes of roses". Colour photography is now so good that few artists need bother about these almost vernier-fine discriminations of the verbal spectrum, and Van Dyke remains a cult author, not because his book is thin on the ground, but because sublimely educated readers are.

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The sensibility of the garden

By John Gage

JOHN DIXON HUNT:
The Figure in the Landscape
Poetry, Painting, and Gardening
during the Eighteenth Century
271pp. Johns Hopkins University
Press, £12.

It is an irony of cultural history that the most novel and the most characteristic art-form of the eighteenth century, which more than any other engaged the thoughts and energies of eighteenth-century men, and which has an especial claim to being peculiarly English, should be the one least accessible to posterity. With very few exceptions—Rousham and Stourhead notable among them—the landscape gardens of the eighteenth century have been swept away or remodelled out of existence, and in modern times they have generally been studied rather as an aspect of philosophy or literature than of visual (or botanical) art. Hitherto the focus has generally been on gardening as a platform for political propaganda—the Whiggish liberalism of the Burlington circle—or as an aesthetic prelude to that taste for "natural" landscape which has been presumed to prevail in Romantic poetry and painting.

But, in *The Figure in the Landscape*, John Dixon Hunt explores gardening and the landscape as mental phenomena, what he calls "the psychological extension of landscape space". In a subtle exposition of the gardening interests of Marvell, Pope, Thomson and Gray, he suggests that developments in the garden are a paradigm of the developing poetic mind, and especially of that mind as more expansively conscious of its own creative role. These developments are summarized in a concluding chapter, which moves from "prospect" poetry to the more introspective treatment of landscape in Goldsmith and Cowper. This crude outline hardly does justice to Mr Hunt's breadth of reading and reference in the literature of the garden, but this reading is ancillary to the central poetic theme; although it is illustrated by seventy-five plates, many of them freshly chosen and all of them functional, this is a book which has surprisingly little to do with landscape gardening or painting themselves.

A few years ago, in an anthology of garden literature gathered, under Peter Willis, under the title *The Genius of the Place*, Mr Hunt called to mind what Horace Walpole called "the Three Ages of Nature", namely poetry, painting, and gardening; and he succeeded brilliantly. In this new book he has set himself a far more herculean task, and although he offers a good deal of what would be interest critics of English literature, he has missed the opportunity of showing how a number of linguistic conventions combined to create the series of landscapes which fascinated several generations of poets.

A literary conception of imagination is here made the touchstone of value; although the preface rebuts the idea that Mr Hunt's view of the progress of landscape sensibility might be teleological, time and again we sense the Romantic waiting to set things right. Thus the "emblematic" *horvius conclusus* of

Wright of Derby's portrait of Brooke Boothby in the Tate Gallery, where the constant figure looks out placidly from a dumpy and leafy doll, while his gloved fingers fidget with a manuscript of Rousseau, Hunt writes:

Apart from the word "Rousseau" on Boothby's book, there is nothing in the painting which requires our verbal or literary participation. Boothby's solitary reflections are no longer accommodated within a garden whose apparatus of inscription, iconography, and temple as in Claude's painting *Landscape with Apollo and the Muses* (1), provides a vocabulary for his thoughts.

But this is clearly not so: Boothby's melancholic gesture, his rigid *deshabille* and equally studied rural setting are part of another, but no less specific or traditional vocabulary of visual symbolism than Claude's. The quality of the interest chiefly to the quality of Wright's observation, for his sister is in the grip of the same sort of visual cliché as the painters who cluster round the dashing waterfall in a watercolour by Hearne also illustrated in the book—a site which, according to the Burkean aesthetic adopted by Hunt, should have been exclusive to solitude. It is notable that in a view of a similar fall, in Yorksire, engraved shortly before the appearance of Burke's *Philosophical Enquiry*, the several visitors are paying scant attention to the spectacle which in total disregard of the Burkean terminology, is described in the caption as "a Beautiful & Romantic Natural Cascade".

The problems attending too rigid a juxtaposition of verbal and visual languages may be illustrated in two passages quoted in different contexts by Mr Hunt, from poems by James Thomson and his patron George Lyttelton. An extract addressed to Lyttelton from Thomson's *Spring runs*:

Meantime you gain the height, from whose fair brow
The bursting prospect spreads
And, snatched o'er hill and dale,
And verdant field, and darkening
And villages embosomed soft in
tree-tops.

Of household smoke, your eye excurses
Wide-stretching from the Hall in
whose kind haunt
The hospitable Genius lingers still,
To where the broken landscape, by
degrees

Ascending, roughens into rigid hills
O'er which the Cantabrian mountains
Graces who dress the clouds
That skirt the blue horizon, dusky
rise.

"The whole prospect passage borrows its 'grammar of patterns and structures'", writes Mr Hunt, "from the landscape of the bird's-eye view seen from a high vantage point, the Mompot or Briz, and is precisely the energy of the passage which robs it of picturesque quality: the eye, the towns are marked by 'surging' columns, the terrain itself ascends and roughens."

It is an experience of landscape entirely foreign to cabinet painting of the Claudian type, an experience which began to be recreated in visual terms only with the introduction of moving spectacles like Lyttelton's *Edinburgh* and Thomson's *Edinburgh*, and which, in the case of the latter, was made possible, and even more, where the painted landscape becomes the landscape in its own drama. For more purely Claudian, more static and picturesque are Lyttelton's own *Edinburgh*.

The view beneath a pleasing prospect
Of verdant meads and cultivated
Through these a river rolls
Adorn'd with various tufts of rising
wood;

Here, half conceal'd in trees a
cottage stands,
A castle there the opening plain
commanded,
Beyond a town with glittering
churches is crown'd,
And distant hills the wide horizon
bound.

Since they are so exclusively

torial, they offer no challenge to the painter; they have no power to stimulate the landscape painters of the Romantic generation.

Mr Hunt's disapproval of what he identifies as the pictorial elements in poetry prevents him from assessing convincingly their development in painting and the garden. In his final chapter he suggests that the collaboration of the three arts broke down during the last quarter of the eighteenth century, as poets and painters sought stronger landscape stimuli outside the garden. This does not really seem to be the picture. In the early years of the following century Colt Hoare at Stourhead and Beaumont at Coleorton were reviving the emblematic style of gardening with new buildings, monuments and inscriptions; and they impressed their respective protégés Turner and Constable with the

renewance of associations in real landscape which surely have their origins in such gardening enterprises. Wordsworth was also a friend of Beaumont (he composed the epitaph to Reynolds inscribed on the Cenotaph at Coleorton which was painted by Constable), and it was he, as Hunt points out, who early characterized the aims of poetry, painting and gardening as "to move the affections under the controul of good sense", and who brought associationist as well as purely picturesque conceptions to his *Guide to the Lakes*.

The emphasis on a rather innocent type of imagination is carried into remarks on the more "private explorations" of water-colour and sketch in the period (remarks which avoid the crucial question of the specific functions of these forms), and into an account of the summary style of Gainsborough, his "odd scruples and

marks" which, according to Reynolds, were fleshed out by the spectator himself, sounds like the ancient topos of the "image made by chance" which had been restated by Addison in a gaudy context earlier in the century, and given a systematic gloss and fashionable currency by Alexander Cozens. But Reynolds did not say that reading Gainsborough was an imaginative act, simply that it was a matter of viewing distance; he was applying Horace's principle of *ut pictura poesis*: some poems, like some pictures, are best seen close in, others from far away.

This is a handsome and thoroughly readable book. The title should surely have made clear that the discussion is confined to England, and it would have been helpful to have the sources of the many valuable illustrations, especially as some of them are rather poorly reproduced. The index is quite inadequate and, like the text, perpetuates a mysterious "William Bockforth".



"Boer Sharpshooters near Ladysmith" by Johann Nepomuk Schönborg, Sphero, May 5, 1900. Posting as the representative of a German paper, the Boer headquarters, Schönborg returned under enemy despatches until his cover was blown by a telegram from the Sphero which ended, "London requests you to remain".

Front linesmen

By William Beaver

PAT HODGSON:
The War Illustrators
191pp. Capree, £5.95.

If the boom in military books does not worry observers of society today, it ought to. It is understandable that a ready market is found for books on accoutrements, battles and the colourful aspects of establishing the *Pax Britannica*, but it is somewhat worrying when more than an equal sale is found for books, filled with lurid illustrations, on Nazi Germany.

The *War Illustrators*, however, is a book of value and general interest. By the 1850s advances in mass printing techniques allowed for the comparatively easy reproduction of sketches by "special" war artists. The illustrated papers were established, and the universal literacy. The illustrators vied with each other to employ not only the best combat artists but to be the first to publish their drawings. When the final push towards the Nile got underway in 1896, the *Daily Graphic* employed natives to wrap the fresh sketches of the march to Wad Habesha in a turban and then swim down the Nile to the post—a journey of sixty miles at twelve shillings a trip.

The drawings, the messengers transmitted to a waiting London, like hundreds of others from the Balkans to Burma, were the work of some of the finest Victorian artists. Indeed, Walter Pater, Frederick Remington, Melton Prior, William Homer, the Waad brothers, John Schönborg, and Howard Chandler Christy, to name a few, were among the artists who were so exclusively



"How the Daily Graphic sketches were sent down the Nile" (detail), by W. T. Mandel.

the brutal realism of television at war than the still photographs which supplanted the field artist in the intervening years after the South African War. Reintroducing in *The War Illustrators* the forgotten and neglected aspect of Victorian art, Pat Hodgson has collected 120 examples and presents them like an exhibition: a brief introduction to the artists (mostly British and American) and a catalogue-like explanation of depicted events. The book is both interesting and useful, though clearer reproduction would be desirable and Schönborg's detail and disciplined economy of line particularly deserves at least one full page per drawing. The brief biographies cry out for expansion, as do the

comments on changing print technology and graphic design.

The war artists were the most influential illustrators of their day. They formed the later Victorian notion of war, especially in the established Empire and in America, which ascribed a conception and large standing armies. One suspects it was dusty images by Melton Prior which men carried in their minds on their way to the recruiting office in 1899 and 1914. "Special" made mass propaganda complete. Horrific sketches, like Frederic Villiers's 1876 engraving of the burning of three wounded Serbian soldiers by the Turks, were part and parcel of the outcry against Ottoman misrule in the Balkans upon which Gladstone and the Russians so successfully capitalized and which helped to quietly displace the locus of British concern away from Constantinople to Cairo.

The special artist became the British soldier's first ombudsman, expressing his sufferings and the needs of inefficient planners before the vast public conscience. The artist's role was to draw the public into the war. In 1898, at the age of forty-two, he went to the Western deserts for relief of his asthma, acquiring malaria, and returned with a vast stretch of territory from the Mojave in California to Guaymas in Mexico, and across to Tucson in Arizona. He was determined from the start to write a book on life in the deserts, and mailed the manuscript back to Scribners from Del Rio, Texas, in May 1901.

What makes the result so compelling is its visual accuracy, and command of language, and the surprising colour and light. What held the public transfixed, among the lines was a classic of the book of recognition; here, for the first time in literature, was the full range of desert scenery as only one who had been there can know it rendered verbally with a truthfulness and

Through the mangle

By Alan Bell

NICOLAS BARKER (Editor):
The Early Life of James McBey
An Autobiography 1883-1911
131pp. Oxford University Press.
£5.50.

The slim, uncompleted autobiography of a rather out-of-favour Scottish etcher may not seem to promise any great literary excitement, but *The Early Life of James McBey* is original and impressive. The text has been sympathetically edited by Nicolas Barker, who was originally interested as a bibliographer in McBey's collections of old etching papers, but divined the special quality of the manuscript, and the book has been beautifully produced by the Oxford University Press.

The text fully deserves the care it has received, being the remarkable story, told with a new skill and precision, of how (in the words of the foreword) "a native talent of exceptional strength was discovered and self-taught, and finally broke out of the shackles of ignorance and an unwholesome background". McBey portrays his background

with a simplicity affected neither by nostalgia nor loathing, both of which would have been easy and understandable.

His boyhood as the bastard son of a blacksmith's daughter in the coastal agricultural community of Buchan seems to have affinities in bleakness and bitter local wisdom with the literature of Robin Flower's *Blackie Islands*, and American readers may find parallels with the Maine coast. McBey was born into a community in which the Tay Bridge disaster was seen as a retribution for Sunday travel, and where a crushed pinkie-finger was straightened by a tweak of the blacksmith's tongue. His existence was more unromantic than most. The father had killed early and his mother, whom he always knew as "Annie", showed him no affection whatever, although life had thrown them together very closely. The small boy's having to leech his mother's temple to relieve the eye affliction which eventually killed her recalls the young Gosses' vigils over his dying mother.

Bleak though this background was (and the American print-collector who commissioned the autobiography in 1947, when McBey was sixty-four, found it too stark to publish), it was not without its rewards. McBey's childhood was redeemed by the loving care of his grandmother

and by the gradual recognition and fostered of his artistic interests. His grandmother, to whom he was particularly devoted, was a woman of simple and austere faith, shrewd and terse in manner and speech, but lovable with it and a woman of enormous qualities. (She always followed her boiled egg with the crushed shell, not for religious penance or further nourishment, but "to cut up any hairs that might be in the stomach.") Life with her did much to compensate for Annie's bitterness and steady hostility to his early artistic efforts: "I wish I could see it" was the sad and reluctant comment he received from her when after years of minor work he completed a portrait of his grandmother. McBey's stark report of his mother's suicide, inevitable and pathetic as it was, is done with a memorable economy.

McBey's early career as a bank clerk was equally barren soil for the flowering of his art. The story of his commercial life from the moment he donned dicky and cuffs, the futility of respectability, as a trustee clerk in Aberdeen, with all the now fascinating detail of current account management, and ledger manipulation, is full of interest in itself. It is even more important when the few accidental opportunities it gave him for advancing his artistic education are revealed. The chance of a locum clerkship at Kirkcaldy provided an excuse to see a Whistler exhibition, and a trip to London accompanying £120,000 of North of Scotland Bank gold to Threaplandale Street, was turned into a quick excursion to Paris to see the Luxembourg and the Louvre.

It was something of an achievement even to have known of the great galleries of Europe, and each stage of the young man's development can be traced against his artless background: from a memory for shapes discovered in a school geography class, a half-crown prize at a local flower show, tips on oil painting from the *Boy's Own Paper*.

Each stage prepared him for his entry into another kingdom, with inadequate evening lessons in Aberdeen and the local Free Library of which he took full and anxious advantage; "the rest of my [sparse] working hours were by the Grace of God and the generosity of Andrew Carnegie spent in another world". There he came across Lalanne's *Portrait of Etching*, the drawing equipment it prescribed was suitable for the future outdoor practice which the narrow world of his fellow clerks dictated. A plate was prepared to Lalanne's specifications and he was sent to the drawing ornament at the time of the attack by the needle on the wax ground, followed by his disappointment when the first attempt at printing (with the Bank's copy press) failed: and a local bookshop, where at home did the job. "There, in front of my unbelieving eyes, was a perfect print" (and it is reproduced here, with several other specimens of his early work). There could be no looking back.

A minute inheritance offered the possibility of release and he jumped at it, choosing to go to Holland where he was at last able to break away from Scotland and to develop his technique and his market in a conventional way. And here the narrative breaks off. Nicolas Barker's concise postscript takes us through McBey's prosperity as a keenly pursued etcher at the height of his fame, his marriage, his children, but prosperous and industrious old age in America and Tanglewood, until his death-bed in 1959 when "he continued at intervals to sketch in the air with his stub of pencil".

The publication of McBey's *Early Life* has been accompanied by several exhibitions which have shown the range of his work, unexpected perhaps by those who know of him principally as an etcher. H. H. Kynett of Philadelphia, who suggested the autobiography, was a substantial benefactor of Aberdeen Art Gallery and Museum, which mounted an exhibition, each in the summer. Collections held another exhibition in London in June, and there is a major display devoted to his whole career at the Imperial War Museum (closing on September 4). These three shows will re-educate the public and stimulate new enthusiasm for McBey as an artist, but the discovery and excellent publication of this remarkable fragment will give him another and equally enduring reputation.

A view of the sands

By Reyner Banham

JOHN C. VAN DYKE:
The Desert
Facsimile Reprint of 1903 Edition
Introduction by Lawrence Clark Powell
249pp. Tucson: Arizona Historical Society/Arizona Silhouettes, \$10.

Who is this connoisseur—not to say snob—of atmosphere, who will bid you observe how dense is the atmosphere at sunset between the Pinalina and the dome of St Peters, then complaining that the same thick air is all over Europe, the Mediterranean, Mesopotamia, the Ganges, disdainfully observes that it "has been breathed and burned and battle smoked for ten thousand years" and compares it favourably to the "clear and scentless" absolutely intangible air of Montana, and finally puts down the colours of the Venetian atmosphere as "artificial, a chemical colour, caused by the disintegration of matter, the decay of stone, wood and iron torn from the neighbouring mountains".

Obviously an American, and with a kind of cult: readership in America since the early 1900s. I myself joined the faithful on discovering a copy of *The Desert*, a lineal descendant of a native son, in a half of it at a sitting (or, rather, standing, propped against the linen-shelves under a naked lampbulb) I resolved (after several months of heart-searching) to read it on the next visit, and discovered that some less scrupled desert-freak had got there first. This facsimile reprint will be a service to the cult, but should also bring John C. van Dyke's aerial vision and chromatic sensibilities to the wider public he may deserve.

Van Dyke, historian and well-travelled aristocrat of the older type, was raised in Minnesota and knew the high plains well before committing his life to the Sage Library at Rutgers. In 1898, at the age of forty-two, he went to the Western deserts for relief of his asthma, acquiring malaria, and returned with a vast stretch of territory from the Mojave in California to Guaymas in Mexico, and across to Tucson in Arizona. He was determined from the start to write a book on life in the deserts, and mailed the manuscript back to Scribners from Del Rio, Texas, in May 1901.

What makes the result so compelling is its visual accuracy, and command of language, and the surprising colour and light. What held the public transfixed, among the lines was a classic of the book of recognition; here, for the first time in literature, was the full range of desert scenery as only one who had been there can know it rendered verbally with a truthfulness and

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The age of Tito

By Michael Waller

DENNISON RUSINOV:
The Yugoslav Experiment 1948-1974
410pp. Harv. £9.50.

The American Universities Field Staff reports which Dennison Rusinov has been writing since 1963 have provided many of the more authoritative and interesting footnotes in the literature on Yugoslavia, footnotes which have often shone brighter than the textual firmament in which they have been set. Now Rusinov has published his own full account of what has been happening in Yugoslavia since 1948. This result is an outstanding contribution to a rather peculiar literature.

The peculiarity of the literature on Yugoslavia stems, quite reasonably, from the exceptional nature of Yugoslavia itself. Two things have particularly attracted research. One is the epic story of Yugoslav nationhood and independence, together with the problems of nationality which are bound up with this; the other is the export of revolution (not so much the workings of social self-management, since he tells this story exceptionally well, the book deserves high praise). But his account reveals much of the more the need, for example, for a full treatment of the League of Communists, which has been playing hide-and-seek since 1952, but which has revealed itself in events since 1972 as still the major actor. However peculiar Yugoslavia's recent history and politics, the familiar landmarks of communist politics can be discerned and some of the more important of them (cadre policy, and the League's role, for example) deserve more attention than they have so far had.

Rusinov's text is not without its infelicities. Scarcely does March 5, and not March 3, 1953 (some more important facts are after all more important than others). There are some curious figures on page 204 where, moreover, "cooperating peasants" are distinguished from members of cooperatives without any clarification. This particular infelicity is in fact symptomatic of a greater one. The statistical material on the economy which the author provides is adequate and well-chosen but, particularly in the field of agriculture, it

is not always clearly set out, nor is it linked to important distinctions concerning Yugoslavia's chosen development pattern. Since, in the simplest terms, that pattern has involved allowing the private peasant to tend for itself while ensuring maximum efficiency on the state-run farms, it becomes essential to separate out the figures for ownership, production and productivity relating to each category. This Rusinov does not always do.

It is a pity also that he does not tell us more about the military. He makes it clear that the army's role is an important one, but does not spell out what this role has been. This is important because, in so far as a context as Yugoslav nationhood, the question is continuously posed as to what agencies hold the reins of power. The army, which plays a crucial role. But, as Rusinov shows, it contains within itself decentralizing and centralizing forces, and by 1972 seemed to have willed its own Balkanization. That particularly is clear when we are told (whether permanently or not remains problematic, like so much in Yugoslav politics) by a second agent of unity: Tito, wielding the greater threat of Soviet intervention. The third agent of national unity is the military, which admittedly has so far remained off-stage, but the importance of which to the political equation was brought out by the arrangements made for its inclusion in the complex constitutional provisions of the 1974 constitution.

But these are minor weaknesses which are well compensated by the book's strengths, and in particular the masterly treatment of the series of decisions at leadership level which post-1948 Yugoslav history has comprised. Each turning-point is clearly defined, the issues fully treated and the individual actors sensitively portrayed. From this point of view the book is a tour de force, the product of prolonged on-the-spot familiarity with the Yugoslav scene. Nor does the abundance of detail obscure Rusinov's vision of the Yugoslav experience as a whole, and his detached observations here have a relevance far beyond one idiosyncratic state. Speaking of the "reformation of the Yugoslav state," he says: "The basic theoretical premise of the system in general... was that the working class should have all the basic choices. The reformers 'knew' that this was not true and acted accordingly, but they consistently said that it was." This is the basic dilemma. Communism in many societies has meant sweeping economic progress, significant social equality, even, in some important senses, more involvement in administration. But there is a basic contradiction between the goals of these systems and the party's leading role, as so far defined in practice. The emperor has no clothes. The irony in Yugoslavia is that the leadership's move towards social self-management has sharpened this contradiction, and that the liberty of expression which the leadership has



"Bridal Pair" by Josip Generac from Naive Art: Painting from Yugoslavia, selected and introduced by Boris Kelenen (39pp. Phaidon Giant Art Paperback, £4.50). The bride and groom are from the home of several generations of the Yugoslav peasant painters who first came to be recognized more widely in the 1930s.

allowed has enabled Marković and the Praxis people to point this out. Which is why Marković had to be removed from his post in Belgrade University in contravention of the rules concerning social self-management.

Rusinov notes that the partisan war which led to the founding of the new Yugoslavia has appeared in the heroic ballads in dactylic hexameter to be sung by the people who still occasionally form the mountains where the great battles were fought. I suspect that he is himself unwary of the Homeric quality of his own text. The major characters resemble nothing so much as the gods of Homer's epics, gathering at the behest of "Zeus to observe and arrange the activities of the mortal down below and to settle their own squabbles. Each is sharply defined and has a place in the story: the wily Bakarić, emerging from his Croatian fortress when crisis looms; Ranković, the god of order, law, and getting his own nemeses; the over-naturalistic Džilas, a god to challenge the gods, cast down into Tartarus; and Tito the cloud-gatherer, calling them to order and dominating their agendas from his Olympian island of Belgrade. We even have the nectar, in the form of the serried ranks of Mercedes at the

tenth League congress, "all black and all apparently new". In one way this impression (whether it is intended or not) is valuable. It highlights the clubbish nature of the perennial inner elite and corroborates the criticisms of Praxis; it attests Rusinov's sensitivity to the flavour and content of Yugoslav history and culture; and it gives a perceptive picture of the "naive art" of the Yugoslav people, which dominated the scene through the 1930s and 1940s, exercised considerable influence in Finland. Even those who privately rejected political nationalism, such as the cosmopolitan aesthete Clavi Panvalova, felt compelled to follow the nationalist line in their public utterances.

Professor Wilson traces the development of folklore studies as the propaganda tool of nationalism in Finland down to the end of the Second World War. His argument is interesting, though I suspect folklorists will find much to disagree with in his text. Unfortunately, he fails to provide an adequate definition of nationalism, a term used extremely loosely in this book. It is rather difficult, for example, to accept without demur such statements as the Finns discovering in Herder "four major dogmas which would eventually undergird Finnish nationalistic struggles".

Professor Wilson seems to see autonomous Finland living constantly under the threat of Russification, which it certainly was not. The cultural endeavours of the Finns were favourably regarded by Imperial Russia. Finnish ethnographers and folklorists received considerable support from Russian patrons. Anders Sjögren, whom we find swearing solemn oaths on page 3, but of whom we hear remarkably little in subsequent pages, ended his book with a warning to the Finns to beware of the "separatist" tendencies of the Finnish nationalists who were Swedish-speaking "separatists" rather than Finnish nationalists who were Finnish-speaking. It was a Swedish-speaking "separatist" Finnish society was a gross deal less united during the years of crisis at the beginning of this century than Wilson would have us believe. As one Finnish historian has recently noted, nearly half the Finnish people preferred to place class solidarity before national unity after 1905.

The author is much concerned to show how folklore studies can be used for political ends: a history, no less than folklore, has a political purpose in Finland. Nowhere is the white nationalist interpretation of Finnish history better preserved than in this account of the folklore in which folklore can be used to support the nationalist line.

According to the Kalevala

By David Kirby

WILLIAM A. WILSON:
Folklore and Nationalism in Modern Finland
272pp. Indiana University Press, £7.50.

Since its first appearance in print in 1835, *Kalevala*, or *Old Karelian Poems from the Ancient Times of the Finnish People*, has occupied a dominant position in Finnish culture. It has provided inspiration for Finland's poets, painters and musicians, and has provoked heated debate among ethnographers and folklorists. Indeed, like most national epics, it is less read than talked about. It is the debate aroused by *Kalevala* which provides William A. Wilson with the main theme of his book.

As Wilson shows, folklore study in Finland has not confined itself to the quiet groves of academe. As a plea for government subsidisation for folklore research in 1951 put it, "the bringing to light of the fresh uniqueness of folk culture has contributed to the realization of political independence and has otherwise advanced political thought". Not every European folklorist would claim the same for his own modest endeavours. The nationalists of the inter-war years, politician and folklorist alike, were even more forthright in acclaiming the value of folklore as the mainspring of national consciousness and pride. *Kalevala* was popularly portrayed as the holy book of the Finnish people, and although serious scholars had ceased to regard it as authentic folklore in the 1880s, they did little to deny this. *Kalevala* acquired a sacred aura to serve a political purpose, as the inspiration of the Finnish people, whose sacred duty it was to liberate eastern Karelia, popularly regarded as the homeland of the Kalevala from Russian bondage. Powerful Karelian society, which dominated the literary life during the 1920s and 1930s, exercised considerable influence in Finland. Even those who privately rejected political nationalism, such as the cosmopolitan aesthete Clavi Panvalova, felt compelled to follow the nationalist line in their public utterances.

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IRELAND

Dreams and dialectic

By Roger McHugh

DENIS JOHNSTON:
The Dramatic Works of Denis Johnston
Volume 1
395pp. Gerrards Cross: Colin Smythe, £9.75.

"The Old Lady Says 'No'" were the five words written on the rejection slip of Denis Johnston's play *Shadow Dance*, when it was returned by the Abbey Theatre. It seems probable that they referred to Lady Gregory, who had bewitched the Irish stage and who detected some "coarseness" in the play. If so, she did the author a double favour by providing him with a better title and by ensuring that the play would not be produced by the Abbey. Fortunately the Gate Theatre Company was on the lookout for precisely this kind of play and in 1929 Hilson Edwards directed *The Old Lady Says 'No'* at the Peacock Theatre, Dublin, where it was immediately successful.

It is the first play in the first volume of *The Dramatic Works of Denis Johnston*, and recalls the excitement which it generated at that time. It is a dream play in which the romantic revolutionary, Robert Emmet, finds himself in the first decade of the Irish Free State and encounters a most of its sacred cows, take him for a madman, a murderer, a sex-fiend, a propagator of dangerous gospels, a joke. This was a perfect set-up for satire, and the mass-movement, dance, rapid transitions of scene and character gave it a kind of theatrical magic which O'Casey had achieved by other means.

Johnston, perhaps catching a hint from Strindberg, was trying to do what Josef Capik had done in *Many Names*, a madman and a clown, a man who is a madman a few years before, to cast a cold eye on contemporary social realities and pretensions by means of a dream play. In *Shadow Dance* it is the Irish dream play, the Abbey, some of its sacred cows, has been eroded by topicality, some of its wit seems slightly off-target now, but enough of its shafts go home and enough of its theatrical magic remains to make it a memorable play.

Landscape artists

By Douglas Sealy

ANDREW CARPENTER (Editor):
Place, Personality and the Irish Writer
199pp. Gerrards Cross: Colin Smythe, £7.50.

The essays in *Place, Personality and the Irish Writer* originated as lectures given in Galway in July 1976. The conference was organized by Lorna Reynolds, who felt that the landscape of the West, rather than the landscape of the East and the mountains of the South, was the most distinctive of visible phenomena behind the personalities.

In the event we have a series of essays on the subject connected with the theme. A Norman Jeffares' introductory survey shows the use made of Irish scenery by writers from Swift to Joyce Cary, and the readily appears that the writer influences the scenery rather than the reverse. The essays all include, in addition to the literary, the visual arts, and what we see is what we want to see. Years ago an immortal country scene was depicted with mythical heroes, and he found it in *Boyhood* and *Rosscarbery* as a "double vision" in Anglo-Irish literature. He suggests that the Irish writer is both writer and countryman, and that the countryman is both writer and countryman. He suggests that the Irish writer is both writer and countryman, and that the countryman is both writer and countryman.

Robert O'Donoghue's essay on the "Celtic Literary Revival" describes the search of the Irish writer for a national identity which he found in the folklore of the past. He suggests that the Irish writer is both writer and countryman, and that the countryman is both writer and countryman.

A land fit for anti-heroes

By Roy Foster

DANIEL J. CASEY and ROBERT E. RHODES (Editors):
Views of the Irish Peasantry 1800-1916
Hamdon, Connecticut: Archon Books, \$15.

This of this book leads one to expect something else. The editors, Daniel J. Casey and Robert E. Rhodes, are both American scholars, and the book is a collection of essays by American scholars, and the book is a collection of essays by American scholars.

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Seythe and the Sunset seem like an Anglo-Irish burlesque version of *The Old Lady Says 'No'*, but it is relieved by several engaging minor characters, of whom Endymion (the same Castle Boyle O'Connor Fitzmaurice Tisdell Parrell known to Leopold Bloom) is perhaps the most appropriate to a play about revolution; he wears cuffs on his ankles because the world is upside down, he is something of a poet, he is crazy, so he is quite prophetic about "all that delirium of the Irish mind". The ending of the play has a summary trial. Palliser, who will certainly be called to testify against him, refuses to play Judas the Christ and remains playing the Christ instead as the roof falls in. But not before a furious salute is exchanged between the two. Their discussion is intelligent; conceivably Irish television might ban it today, but not the BBC, unless it yields to the process which treats as a youth remaining reckless middle-age". To isolate the dialectic of Teley and Palliser perhaps makes *The*

Most of the hang-ups of the Anglo-Irish conscience are probably shared by Jonathan Swift, and it is interesting to find Johnston's play about Swift, *The Draining* (1940, revised 1954), included

one's spirits are not raised by an edited volume which features such of the unimpressive topic of nineteenth-century Irish traditional narrative songs in English. Maurice Harvey has more than made up for the loss of the nineteenth-century Irish literature, but commits the howler of attributing *The Collectors* to John Banham instead of Gerald Griffin. But much to say regarding the unlikely of committing soliloquies like describing Lady Gregory as a "nationalist", and there is a residue of considerable value.

An anti-historical tone can still come through, however, even in directly. All MacLachlainn's piece on Gaelic nationalism and the peasantry quotes a striking recent statement by an Irish language poet calling for the creation of "castles" (in Irish, of course). One can only think of the Spanish Carlist in the 1930s who expected the prime minister's function to be to "stay with the king and talk of the chase". MacLachlainn does not spare such deluded thinking; he is interesting on the whole question of cultural nationalism, but his simplifications would not gather from the ambivalence of the Catholic Church establishment towards nationalism in the latter nineteenth century) and the Gaelic League's actual belief in the objective truth of the consolidating theory that all the peasantry were descended from a race of kings. But it remains an attractive and provocative piece.

Estyn Evans is characteristically thoughtful and readable on the topic of nineteenth-century peasant beliefs; a careful identification is made of the Irish peasant as a stockman, and the geography attendant upon this characteristic analysis. (We are also reminded, yet again, of the East-West dichotomy: true to stereotype, animals lived in the people's houses in the West but never in the East.)

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in this volume. It is not the literary or political Swift who figures here, but the Swift the enigmatic lover, with the five women fighting for the likes of him, just like Christy Mahon or W. B. Yeats. The Swift-Stella-Vanessa triangle is fascinating. It has elements of mystery, of love, of jealousy, of tragedy, and it is a dramatic treatment. But to dramatize it you must have a theory about the real nature of the relationship. It is some thirty-five years since I heard Denis Johnston adduce this; that Swift was the illegitimate son of Sir John Temple, the elder, and was consequently the half-brother of Sir William Temple; he was thus the uncle of Sir William Temple's daughter, Esther Johnson (Stella). He could not marry Stella without contracting a discoverable incestuous union, and when Peter van Homrigh (Vanessa) forced the pace by demanding to know whether the man she loved was really married to Stella, Swift broke her heart by angry silence and rejection rather than reveal the truth. Denis Johnston's interpretation was elaborated in his book *In Search of Swift* (1953) and has become a staple of Swift scholars and biographers, quite unjustly, I think, for it is more in conformity with the available evidence than any alternative theory, including the extremely flimsy one which Yeats

adopted in *The Words Upon the Window-pane*. Johnston's play is highly dramatic; he imagines some players of a masque of the Seven Deadly Sins in St. Patrick's Cathedral, Dublin, in 1835, being shown the Swift and Stella, who were buried there a century before, and acting out their conception of the triangle drama to good effect.

To conclude, the plays in this volume, which are excellent, show Johnston to be an Irish counterpart of the American playwright Elmer Rice, who could change his technique from the realism of *Street Scene* to the expressionism of *The Immigrant* or the documentary style of *Councilor-at-Law*. Both contemporaries, both lawyers, both concerned with social justice, both good dramatists, Johnston is specially equipped to write of the Irish scene: after the execution of the 1916 leaders he tried vainly to join the IRA; after the Second World War he was awarded the OBE for his work as a war correspondent and as a pioneer of BBC television. In his way he is a typical Anglo-Irishman with a view from the top of Mahon's coffin and a dramatist who, one hopes, will continue to write for many years.

The whole collection, despite its good parts, strikes the same note of chance missed. Careless proof-reading and other shortcomings do not help; but the essential problem in *Views of the Irish Peasantry 1800-1916* may be one of definition. Maurice Harvey's "Gaelic League" is in Irish cultural nationalism; for it was the unlovely sight of the English middle class buying for blood that drove Moore back to Ireland at that inauspicious time to the company of Martyn, Yeats and A.E.

The last, and least satisfactory, piece in the book is also about a Yeats, "the brother who painted". It is by Marilyn Gaddis Rose, who gets off to a bad start by referring to "West Ireland" (which would probably not have agreed with the description, and nor do I. On another level, Patrick Kavanagh thought of the peasantry as "all that mass of mankind which lives below a certain level of consciousness; they live in the dark, they are the unconscious, and they scream when they see the light". I can understand that. But Kavanagh was himself of peasant stock.

GEORGE MEREDITH

DAVID WILLIAMS
'He has unravell'd the hidden skein of the life with great skill... and his rehabilitation of the best novels... is carried out with a shrewd and perceptive enthusiasm.'
Philip Toynbee, *The Observer* £7.95

TOM MOORE

TERENCE DE VERE WHITE
'This is a biography of perception and intelligence, a convincing portrait of a man... who gave much more to life than he took from it.'
Philip Ziegler, *The Times* £7.50

THE NOTABLE MAN

The Life and Times of Oliver Goldsmith
JOHN GINGER
'John Ginger portrays Goldsmith as a complex and gifted comedian profoundly aware of his own darker nature... and skilled at concealing it... He would have been embarrassed, delighted and furious at the shrewd perspicacity of *The Notable Man*.'
Michael Ratcliffe, *The Times* £7.95

HAMISH HAMILTON

The war masters of Tokyo

By Peter Lowe

IAN NISH:
Japanese Foreign Policy 1869-1942
Kansuigaseki to Miyakazaki
346pp, Routledge, £6.25.

JAMES WILLIAM MORLEY (Editor):
Deterrent Diplomacy
Japan, Germany, and the USSR
1935-1940
363pp, Columbia University Press,
£21.50.

ARON SHAI:
Origins of the War in the East
267pp, Croom Helm, £9.50.

The origins of Japan's involvement in the Second World War can be traced back a long way. This is not to say that the Pacific War was inevitable but rather to underline the importance of considering the events of 1931-45 in the context of Japan's ambivalent relationship with the West from the middle of the nineteenth century onwards. Japan was so weak in the 1850s and 1860s that the menace of foreign domination resulted in a traumatic experience that was to constitute a powerful spur to modernization. Iwakura Tomomi wrote in 1869:

We must guard our country's independence. Foreign troops have been stationed on our open ports, and even when foreigners who live in our country violate our laws, we are forced to stand by while agents of their governments exercise jurisdiction over them. Our country has never before known such shame and disgrace.

The defensive motive is rapidly transforming Japan politically and economically because overtly aggressive on a large scale in the twentieth century, especially in the 1930s and immediately after. Japan must now strike out against Western imperialism and lead the suffering peoples of East and Southeast Asia to new futures. The emphasis was on Japan's responsibility, it was right to lead; native nationalists in the Japanese-occupied areas soon realized that this was the trouble with liberation presided over from Tokyo.

Ian Nish, perhaps best known for his meticulous two-volume study of the Anglo-Japanese alliance, has produced a stimulating survey of Japanese foreign policy extending from the Meiji restoration to the early stages of the Pacific War. He discusses Japan's rise as a great power in the light of the careers of some of the men principally responsible for the formulation of policy. The personalities are linked with an analysis of the growth of the bureaucracy and the interaction between Kasuigaseki (the Foreign Ministry) and Miyakazaki (the general headquarters of the army).

There is much to be said for this approach, in that most Japanese foreign ministers have, as the author observes, been cardboard figures "to Western historians". It is his achievement that the ministers are successfully brought to life and conclusively appraised, often with a striking phrase or brief description. The central figures under discussion are Iwakura, Matsuoka, Aoki, Komura, Kato, Ishii, Shidehara, Tanaka, Uchida, Hirota, Kono and Matsuo. The Foreign Ministry was vitally important in establishing Japan's credibility and

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political career. The author cites Kato's excessive reliance on subordinate officials and his relative ignorance of China as significant factors in this. There should be added a certain arrogance in Kato's character and over-confidence concerning what Japan could accomplish while the European powers and the United States were preoccupied elsewhere. Shidehara Kijuro resembled Kato in one respect: "He was a loner and did not suffer fools gladly." Shidehara was regarded by contemporaries as more progressive in his attitude to China and to international cooperation in general. He eschewed the bullying and blustering approach to China previously pursued; hence the respect shown him by Henry L. Stimson, the American Secretary of State, during the Manchurian crisis broke in 1931. Yet Shidehara was a tenacious defender of Japanese rights, not least in Manchuria. Dr Nish is perceptive in observing that Kasuigaseki attained the status of its influence and international respect under Shidehara's direction but that a reaction was already under way against Shidehara in militant circles, which regarded him as ineffective and too much of a diplomat.

Matsuoka Yosuke offered a profound contrast to Shidehara. Loquacious, erratic, unpredictable and contradictory, Matsuoka fittingly symbolized Japan's move into closer relations with the European Axis in 1940-41. Dr Nish accurately portrays Matsuoka as an ambitious schemer who followed a policy of meretricious brinkmanship. Matsuoka did not want war with the United States but he himself had helped to push his country over the brink with his rash utterances and initiatives in 1940-41. Matsuoka was in no sense typical of the policy-makers discussed here and it is appropriate that he was the last foreign minister to impose himself to any marked degree before Japan's surrender.

Dr Nish's survey is most valuable for illuminating the processes involved in the formulation of policy in Japan. The merit of the work is enhanced by the inclusion of some

forty pages of documents, translated by the author, most of which have not appeared in English before.

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Love and nationalism

By A. R. Keldar

JOHN F. DEVLIN I:
The Ba'ath Party
A History from its Origins to 1968
372pp, Hoover Institution Press,
\$11.95.

John F. Devlin has undertaken a difficult task in writing a history of such a flaccid party. The Ba'ath Party, which has made a considerable contribution to the radicalization of Arab politics, especially in Syria and Iraq. The author's difficulty has been compounded by the lack of a clear understanding of the functions and status of political party organizations in the contemporary politics of these countries. He is inclined to think that the Ba'ath was the only precursor in this field, and his narrative gives the impression that Ba'athists occupied the central area of radical politics to the exclusion of all others, when in fact the party did not have a significant role to play until the 1950s and early 1960s.

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The significant aspects emerging from this essay are the extent of discipline and provocation coming from younger army officers and the desire, both of the emperor and of the general staff, to curb local initiative. In August, 1939, the Kwantung army wished to embark on a major offensive but was deterred through the proclamation of an imperial order, to the chagrin of the Kwantung officers. Japan suffered the only decisive military defeat inflicted on her before the Pacific War at the hands of the Soviet Union in 1939.

Professor Hata remarks that the Kwantung army had sustained a "total defeat that was inexcusable in every respect"; the Japanese 23rd Division, for example, lost 73 per cent of its entire strength. The reason is explained by a mixture of excessive zeal, underestimation of the enemy and inadequate tactics. It is highly apposite to note one point not made in this essay: on July 18, 1940, Japan signed an agreement virtually accepting the Russian definition of the Manchukuo-Mongolia border at the same

time that Britain reluctantly submitted to Japanese pressure to close the Burma road. One humiliating surrender was accompanied by a considerable, but not complete, success. Japanese Caucasus, explicitly readily enough in terms of the raw materials procurable in Southeast Asia, is even more understandable when seen against the background of the reverses experienced in 1939.

In the third essay Professor Hosoya studies the conclusion of the Tripartite pact. Japan was prepared to envisage a new agreement with Germany in the summer of 1940, following Hitler's remarkable victories in Europe. The Foreign Ministry, now controlled by Matsuoka, supported an agreement but there was stiff opposition from within the army. If less vigorously than formerly.

When the navy minister, Admiral Yoshida Zengo, resigned through ill-health, effective resistance crumbled. As Matsuoka put it in his inimitable way, "unless you can cut the tiger's den, you cannot cut the tiger's cub." Matsuoka hoped that the Tripartite pact would discourage the adoption of a more resolute policy by the United States; instead the pact had the reverse effect.

This volume is greatly to be welcomed. The full complexity of policy-making is revealed and the subtle distinctions between institutions and individuals are clarified. Evidence that Emperor Hirohito worked to halt the slide towards conflict is provided in each essay. We can look forward with enthusiasm to the publication of the later volumes in this series.

In *Origins of the War in the East*, Arnold Shai discusses British policy in East Asia from 1937 to 1939. The balance of this study is rather strange, since more than half of it is devoted to the first six months of the undeclared war (July-December, 1937). Development in 1938 and 1939 are thus treated in less depth. Dr Shai covers the same ground as Bradford Lee's *Britain and the Sino-Japanese War, 1937-1945* (Stanford University Press, 1971) and he does not add significantly to Dr Lee's account.

It is a pity that Mr Devlin has not referred to Elio Kodoury's contribution on political parties in his *Arab Political Movements and Other Studies* (1974), in which he concludes that they "have on the whole, neither succeeded in representing the classes or groups or interests of Arab society nor have they been able to make parliamentary constitutional government work... [They have] become government-sponsored monopolistic parties, the purpose of which is to mobilize the population and control it on behalf of the rulers, whose power derives from military coup d'état." It would have enabled the author to have overcome some of the difficulties which faced him in writing his book.

None the less, he is correct in his assertion that the continual radicalization of Arab politics led to a change in the system of government and the emergence of a new set of leaders whose education and social background is somewhat different from that of their predecessors. What has not altered, however, is the structure of political power. There has not been a significant institutionalization of political power, since this has remained rather behind in the absence of an accepted formula for the rule of law.

The author does not see the union between Egypt and Syria concluded in 1958 and revoked in 1961, a process in which the Ba'ath was instrumental in bringing about, as a turning-point in its history. He opts for the decision to dissolve the party taken in 1959, which he regards as the point of departure for the impetus for a new party, a change of leadership, and a new ideology was to be achieved. However, the question remains as to whether the party would have been dissolved if the union had not taken place. He seems to be oblivious to the fact that the Syrian military establishment is a national institution, in which case the focus of its political activities had remained Syrian-orientated, which may explain the reason for the officers' disenchantment with Nasser's rule.

Having established at the outset that the Ba'ath was essentially an anti-communist movement, the author is rather bewildered by the pseudo-Marxist writings of the 1950s which characterized Ba'athist ideology. He refers to Jamal al-Asad, who reflected the party's ideological system of government in favour

of a people's democracy, the author writes: "He came close to being a classic socialist in his view of the class struggle for real socialism." It is a pity that Mr Devlin has not referred to Elio Kodoury's contribution on political parties in his *Arab Political Movements and Other Studies* (1974), in which he concludes that they "have on the whole, neither succeeded in representing the classes or groups or interests of Arab society nor have they been able to make parliamentary constitutional government work... [They have] become government-sponsored monopolistic parties, the purpose of which is to mobilize the population and control it on behalf of the rulers, whose power derives from military coup d'état." It would have enabled the author to have overcome some of the difficulties which faced him in writing his book.

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only Italy was recruited. The tormented course of German-Japanese relations between 1935 and 1939 is clearly pursued, including the abortive attempt to transform the pact into an alliance in 1939.

In the second essay, which is the most stimulating, Professor Hata considers Japanese-Soviet relations in cogent terms. Hated of the Soviet Union was prevalent in Japan and was found in a virulent form in the Kwantung army, stationed in the puppet state of Manchukuo. The army authorities in Tokyo were more cautious than the officers in Manchukuo. Numerous minor border skirmishes occurred for which the hostilities in the Kwantung army were chiefly responsible. Smith built up the strength of the Red army between 1933 and 1939. When the grave danger of Japanese-Soviet confrontation, and the Tripartite pact. Each essay is translated and introduced by Hans H. Baerwald, Alvin D. Cook, and James William Morley. Minor changes have been made to bring each contribution up to date and to improve the reading in translation.

The significant aspects emerging from this essay are the extent of discipline and provocation coming from younger army officers and the desire, both of the emperor and of the general staff, to curb local initiative. In August, 1939, the Kwantung army wished to embark on a major offensive but was deterred through the proclamation of an imperial order, to the chagrin of the Kwantung officers. Japan suffered the only decisive military defeat inflicted on her before the Pacific War at the hands of the Soviet Union in 1939.

Professor Hata remarks that the Kwantung army had sustained a "total defeat that was inexcusable in every respect"; the Japanese 23rd Division, for example, lost 73 per cent of its entire strength. The reason is explained by a mixture of excessive zeal, underestimation of the enemy and inadequate tactics. It is highly apposite to note one point not made in this essay: on July 18, 1940, Japan signed an agreement virtually accepting the Russian definition of the Manchukuo-Mongolia border at the same

time that Britain reluctantly submitted to Japanese pressure to close the Burma road. One humiliating surrender was accompanied by a considerable, but not complete, success. Japanese Caucasus, explicitly readily enough in terms of the raw materials procurable in Southeast Asia, is even more understandable when seen against the background of the reverses experienced in 1939.

In the third essay Professor Hosoya studies the conclusion of the Tripartite pact. Japan was prepared to envisage a new agreement with Germany in the summer of 1940, following Hitler's remarkable victories in Europe. The Foreign Ministry, now controlled by Matsuoka, supported an agreement but there was stiff opposition from within the army. If less vigorously than formerly.

When the navy minister, Admiral Yoshida Zengo, resigned through ill-health, effective resistance crumbled. As Matsuoka put it in his inimitable way, "unless you can cut the tiger's den, you cannot cut the tiger's cub." Matsuoka hoped that the Tripartite pact would discourage the adoption of a more resolute policy by the United States; instead the pact had the reverse effect.

This volume is greatly to be welcomed. The full complexity of policy-making is revealed and the subtle distinctions between institutions and individuals are clarified. Evidence that Emperor Hirohito worked to halt the slide towards conflict is provided in each essay. We can look forward with enthusiasm to the publication of the later volumes in this series.

In *Origins of the War in the East*, Arnold Shai discusses British policy in East Asia from 1937 to 1939. The balance of this study is rather strange, since more than half of it is devoted to the first six months of the undeclared war (July-December, 1937). Development in 1938 and 1939 are thus treated in less depth. Dr Shai covers the same ground as Bradford Lee's *Britain and the Sino-Japanese War, 1937-1945* (Stanford University Press, 1971) and he does not add significantly to Dr Lee's account.

It is a pity that Mr Devlin has not referred to Elio Kodoury's contribution on political parties in his *Arab Political Movements and Other Studies* (1974), in which he concludes that they "have on the whole, neither succeeded in representing the classes or groups or interests of Arab society nor have they been able to make parliamentary constitutional government work... [They have] become government-sponsored monopolistic parties, the purpose of which is to mobilize the population and control it on behalf of the rulers, whose power derives from military coup d'état." It would have enabled the author to have overcome some of the difficulties which faced him in writing his book.

None the less, he is correct in his assertion that the continual radicalization of Arab politics led to a change in the system of government and the emergence of a new set of leaders whose education and social background is somewhat different from that of their predecessors. What has not altered, however, is the structure of political power. There has not been a significant institutionalization of political power, since this has remained rather behind in the absence of an accepted formula for the rule of law.

The author does not see the union between Egypt and Syria concluded in 1958 and revoked in 1961, a process in which the Ba'ath was instrumental in bringing about, as a turning-point in its history. He opts for the decision to dissolve the party taken in 1959, which he regards as the point of departure for the impetus for a new party, a change of leadership, and a new ideology was to be achieved. However, the question remains as to whether the party would have been dissolved if the union had not taken place. He seems to be oblivious to the fact that the Syrian military establishment is a national institution, in which case the focus of its political activities had remained Syrian-orientated, which may explain the reason for the officers' disenchantment with Nasser's rule.

Having established at the outset that the Ba'ath was essentially an anti-communist movement, the author is rather bewildered by the pseudo-Marxist writings of the 1950s which characterized Ba'athist ideology. He refers to Jamal al-Asad, who reflected the party's ideological system of government in favour

of a people's democracy, the author writes: "He came close to being a classic socialist in his view of the class struggle for real socialism." It is a pity that Mr Devlin has not referred to Elio Kodoury's contribution on political parties in his *Arab Political Movements and Other Studies* (1974), in which he concludes that they "have on the whole, neither succeeded in representing the classes or groups or interests of Arab society nor have they been able to make parliamentary constitutional government work... [They have] become government-sponsored monopolistic parties, the purpose of which is to mobilize the population and control it on behalf of the rulers, whose power derives from military coup d'état." It would have enabled the author to have overcome some of the difficulties which faced him in writing his book.

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The nationalist paradox

By Jacques Rupnik

GEORGE W. SIMMONDS (Editor):
Nationalism in the USSR and Eastern Europe
In the era of Brezhnev and Kosygin
534pp, Detroit: University of Detroit Press, \$12 (paperback, \$6.95).

The new American interest in ethnicity has also given a boost to the study of the national question in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe. Both the American theory of the "melting pot" and the official Soviet belief in the merging of various nationalities into a united Soviet people have now been eroded. This volume is the latest in a series of attempts by American political scientists to shed new light on the emergence of nationalism as a major political force in the Soviet block.

The first part of the book, which deals with the Soviet Union, studies the impact of modernization on

demographic trends, social change and national consciousness. According to the 1970 census, the Russians represent some 53 per cent of the 241 million strong population of the Soviet Union. The uneven level of development, the uneven distribution of the population in the economically more advanced European part of the Soviet Union, and the extremely fast growth rate in the Caucasus and Central Asia. If this trend were to continue, the dominant Russian nationality would in the near future itself become a minority with all the potential political implications this would carry.

Ralph S. Clem in his essay discusses such a possibility, and believes that modernization, in the demographic pattern in Central Asia. This is of course based on the assumption that modernization affects different societies in a similar way; in other words that the emergence of nationalism as a major political force in the Soviet block.

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Future behaviour

By R. D. Attenborough

P. P. G. BATESON and R. A. HINDO
(Editors)
Growing Points in Ethology
560pp. Cambridge University Press.
£16 (paperback £5.50).

Until ethology came into being, observing animal behaviour was regarded as little more than a pleasant pastime for country vicars. Indeed, even when the subject did start to be taken seriously, its pioneers suffered from something of the same attitude: patronizingly, yet not altogether without justice, they were regarded as enthusiastic naturalists with fantastic theories and little idea of what science really demands. Small wonder, then, that ethology should in recent years have been at some pains to stamp itself with the hallmarks of scientific respectability—carefully objective descriptions of behaviour patterns, systematic records of their occurrence, quantitative analysis and rigorous criticisms of woolly ideas. The rightness of this reaction can hardly be disputed: all the same, it is hard to escape the impression that much of the verve and excitement of ethology as a scientific ferment has ebbed away in the process.

Feeling that the time is now ripe for a renewal of attention to this more creative side of the subject, P. P. G. Bateson and R. A. HINDO decided to celebrate twenty-five years of ethology at Cambridge with a conference in which contributors were asked, not to mull over the past, but to talk about ideas they thought important for the subject's future vitality. The results, now published as *Growing Points in Ethology*, are most impressive: eighteen substantial chapters, of

which only a few struck me as less than very stimulating.

One of the most thought-provoking of these contributions is N. K. Humphrey's deftly written essay on "the social function of intellect". His contention is that the remarkable creative intelligence of mankind and other primates would hardly have evolved if it were not useful, and that the use for which it evolved was social rather than practical. Enmeshed in the peculiarly subtle and transient complexities of primate social arrangements, individuals may have a lot to gain, he suggests, from siring up their fellows intelligently and adjusting their own actions so as to reap the greatest reward: evolution may then set up a progressive sophistication of the intellect as individuals compete. Red Queen-like, to quote one another. Until recently, on the other hand, practical problems offered nothing like the same intellectual challenge. So perhaps, Humphrey speculates, our intellect is expressly equipped to deal with social situations, and perhaps, too, we therefore tend to treat technical problems as if they were social.

Functional interpretation of this kind has long been important to ethologists, but the publication of Edward Wilson's recent book *Sociobiology* has set off a new wave of controversy. The suspicion that this has more to do with fashion than with science is a natural one—after all, the fundamental ideas on which that book was based had been around for some time before it appeared. But it would be churlish to dwell on this point when the results are as good as they are here.

As an example of the lucid application of sociobiological reasoning to an actual field study, B. C. R. Bertram's chapter would be hard to beat. Members of lion prides cooperate with one another more, it seems, than ordinary natural selection theory can readily

explain. So Bertram invokes the principle of kin selection (the altruism can evolve if it is directed selectively towards relatives, since they are likely to share its genetic basis) and he shows that degrees of cooperation within the pride do indeed show some correspondence with degrees of relatedness. Similar principles—parental investment, parent-offspring conflict, sexual selection and reciprocal altruism as well as kin selection—are more ambitiously deployed by T. H. Clutton-Brock and P. H. Harvey in their survey of primate social organization. If they do not offer solutions all round in this knottiest of areas, they do at least argue convincingly that the sociobiological approach, emphasizing as it does the interests of the individual or the gene rather than the group, has the potential for sounder functional interpretations of the classic problems of primate mating systems, resource-holding systems, group dynamics and so on—than have yet emerged.

The sociobiology of human beings is a subject on which passions run high, but N. G. Blurton Jones steps in boldly with a most thoughtful and challenging essay. His contention is that sociobiology, with its powerful predictive potential, its view of society as the outcome of strategies adopted by individuals, may fruitfully be combined with ecological anthropology, with its search for generalizations of social behaviour and culture. In making the case he raises a good many interesting questions and suggestions for future research, and this contribution deserves a particularly wide audience. One or two doubts linger in the mind, though. Surely many features of complex societies really are adaptations to social life itself, not to the physical environment? And when he asserts that sociobiological reasoning does not depend on the immutability of

behaviour, does he mean to imply that it holds true for all behaviour, however flexible?

Theories about the development of behaviour have proliferated through ethology's history—so much so, indeed, that one is tempted to say no more than that differences of any kind at any stage may affect future development. In a most persuasive chapter, P. P. G. Bateson puts forward a different, less defeatist view: that development is to some degree a self-correcting process, so that different developmental trajectories may converge on the same point. A process of this kind may be sustained by rules about seeking out certain preferred kinds of environmental stimulation—rules which may themselves be modifiable according to the local conditions.

So it may be fruitful, he suggests, to view the development of a social relationship as a process whereby individuals adjust their standards of behaviour so as to mesh in more harmoniously with those of their partners. In the initial "honeymoon" period, mismatch would be tolerated so as to allow time for adjustment; persistent mismatch, however, would eventually lead to a breaking off of the relationship.

Three other contributions touch instructively on similar themes. J. F. Dunn questions, with good reason, the conventional assumptions about the effects of early experience on child development, though she also acknowledges a major difficulty: the possibility that the findings of the difference between children from different backgrounds reflects not more than the insensitivity of the diagnostic tests used. M. J. A. Simpson describes the development of "projects" in the play of infant monkeys, as they experiment with and refine patterns of interaction with their environment. And R. A. HINDO and J. Stevenson-Hinde set out their approach to the understanding of human relationships through the study of their component interactions: the role of learning in the

development of relationships, and the dynamics of change and stability in them.

Perhaps the least inviting part of the book is the densely theoretical section on the causation of behaviour, but in fact it is very much worth pursuing. R. Dawkins on the principle of the replicator, and particularly on the "neurophysiological" nature of a complete wiring diagram of the nervous system of a species. He argues persuasively that the attractions of this are illusory, that a mass of detail is no substitute for a general principle, and so if in the past ethology has had little luck with its general principles, it should look for better principles rather than retreat into obscurities. His candidate principle is that of hierarchical behaviour: behaviour may be understood, he suggests, as the outcome of a hierarchically organized set of rules governing an animal's decisions about what to do next—a potent idea, taken up by W. H. Thorpe and T. M. Call-Crags in their discussion of birdsong. D. J. McFarland's formidable chapter on the natural selection of optimal decision criteria for behaviour (another fashionable theme in ethology); R. J. Andrew's on selective attention in humans and animals, and J. C. Penterass's on motivational change as the outcome of changes in the integration of intrinsic and extrinsic factors, all these deserve close study, too.

The final two chapters of the book are of a rather different kind. P. B. Medawar contributes a provocatively sceptical essay on the relevance of ethology to the study of mankind—though in the end he is not altogether pessimistic. And Niko Tinbergen, far from preening himself on the achievements of his science, has played such an important part in founding, gives a characteristically sober and modest account of the ecological and social life of modern mankind, advocating that ethologists apply themselves seriously to the solution of these problems.

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Application form may be obtained, on receipt of a stamped addressed envelope, from the Personnel Officer, North-Eastern Education and Library Board, County Hall, 162 Balmora Road, Ballymena BT42 1HN, Northern Ireland, and must be returned not later than FRIDAY, 10th SEPTEMBER, 1977. Conversing in any form will be disqualify.

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Further particulars may be obtained from the Secretary to the University of Glasgow Library, 77-84, Tottenham Court Road, London W1P 0LP. Telephone 01-432 4445, Ext. 4016.

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Further particulars may be obtained from the Secretary to the University of Bath Library, 77-84, Tottenham Court Road, London W1P 0LP. Telephone 01-432 4445, Ext. 4016.

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Disturbed community

By Felix Pickering

BENEDICT KIRBY:
Protopoia
93pp. Gollancz, £2.95.

Blinchey, the hero of Benedict Kirby's *Protopoia*, is an elderly widower with a heart condition. He lives in co Tyrone with his son and his son's family in the white house by the lake which he admired and covered as a child and now owns. He has lived in the area all his life, and used to be a teacher in the local school. He is an undemanding, tranquil sort of person who wears plain-stripe suits and a pince-nez. But coming back from a holiday in Donegal, the family finds their house taken over by masked gunmen.

For this is Northern Ireland in the 1970s: the gunmen force Blinchey to drive into town with a creamery can in the back of his car—in the can is 100lb of ammonium nitrate mixed with fuel oil and about 3lb of gallinets. "That's the way we'll bugger the Brits: technology." He is to leave it near Judge Flynn's house. If he refuses, it will be the worse for his family. But Judge Flynn has

though "premonitions were notions you had after the event." All the time, Blinchey is seeing the past alongside the present: when he walks in the graveyard, the men and women buried there are all alive in his memory; he knows the fathers of two of the masked gunmen, and can hardly keep up the false formality which their new roles require; he knows that he will be held up on an uncomfortable long time in his car by the policeman at the checkpoint, as that particular constable's father was "an amiable long-winded man." When he stops the bomb-laden car on the bridge he reads the words he himself scrawled in the wet concrete of the parapet half a century ago. Everything he sees is interpreted through memory and long knowledge.

As the present is overlaid by the past, the peacefulness of the familiar of what is happening. The birds sang round Daboch's house. Blinchey. He curses the "gallinets"

For a bit of fluff

By Virginia

IRINA, BEN:
All Thy Waves
284pp. Hamish Hamilton, £4.25.

An elderly Russian woman married, like myself, to a physicist offered me the wisdom of her long husband. "They make very good husbands. Very good fathers. They are not going to desert you for some little bit of fluff. But the physics—the physics always comes first." Irina, the heroine of this novel, a Russian wife of "atom man" Adrian Radcliffe, would agree with her. Her husband, a brilliant physicist, is a hard-working, sound-sleeping husband. Likes sex with her but does not want children (babies will when he glances at them), and despises the classical music which is

Irina's only enduring solace. A childhood disrupted by revolution has left her insecure and totally dependent on her home and husband's affection. But she picked a catch: the physicist's problem out-admired—"our trouble comes from being artists." "Where does their trouble come from?" "From being scientists," I suppose. "Can't they find it difficult?" "The young ones

Alas for Irina, her insecurity makes her unbalanced even by the standards of 1930s Central Europe, to which the story is set (giving it a certain amount of period charm). Adrian calls her "child"; cooking and typing for him keeps her busy that resolving to find time to practice the violin is a major decision, and on the whole, before Adrian's selfish disapproval. Despite their passionate physical bond, Irina fears that "the inhuman detachment of the scientist" will come to dominate the relationship. So it must already have been doing so in his life before, pre-

but for voyages to the Arctic and then for a bit of fluff, a Japanese student.

Irina's situation is unenviable and occasionally touching: notably, when she has to refuse her mother a home in England as Adrian would not put up with her. But the contrast between her and the suffering, sensitive soul and the stereotypes around her is so crude ("plain, kindly" does versus cynical, loose-lipped, sensual ones) that sympathy is dulled. The narrative becomes a rambling self-indulgent complaint: "I see so little of him in my time." "It's the kind of life most of us, wives of university teachers, are condemned to lead."

One integration Alan Spence falls to achieve is of the two languages that every working-class writer speaks, his first language and the language instilled by education. His characters speak Glaswegian but think in standard literary English. An old man speaks of "remembering life" but thinks that "his whole life had been a graduation. Clearly that thought is Mr Spence's. The old man would have thought it differently.

Satori resartus

By Roger Garfitt

ALAN SPENCE:
His Colours They Are Fine
222pp. Collins, £3.95.

It is a sign of the times that Alan Spence, a Glaswegian who grew up within a bottle's throw of Ulster Park, should now be running the Sri Chinmoy Meditation Centre. As a writer he has to achieve his own act of integration, to make the burning of incense and the chanting of a mantra seem as much a part of Hogmanay as first-footing or the singing of Auld Lang Syne. In *His Colours They Are Fine*, his first collection of short stories, he succeeds almost superbly.

The first group of stories presents episodes from a childhood in a Govan tenement, from games in

the back court as a small boy to vandalism and gang fights as an adolescent. A contrast is drawn between the Govan tenement and the private school and grammar school, to become Alan Spence, and his mate Shuggie, who leaves school at sixteen and leads the local gang, the Govan team, his options reduced to joining the army before he or one of his victims comes to a grievous bodily harm. The contrast is drawn but not underlined: the stories ring true precisely because they resist the temptation to treat Govan as an environment and simply recall it as a home.

The autobiography continues in a third group of stories, which show Alan Spence going through the "Changes", as one story is called, common to his generation: dropping acid, drifting, reading Buddhism by the light of a motorway signboard. Here again he evinces his integrity, refusing to hitch a lift from Keweenaw and flinging through irony and humour his own road to satori. Autobiography is one thing, however, fiction another. What convinces one of Alan Spence's talent as a writer is the second group of stories, where he rises with evident zest to the imaginative and formal challenges of fiction.

"The Rain Dance" interweaves Glasgow traditions—the bride's eye-wedding parade through the streets, the bridegroom's stag night—with symbols of change: an Indian headress, trophy of a brother's emigration to Canada; over the new couple's mantelpiece, an image of Siva. The Palace" achieves the final integration, creating a moment of satori, a perception of the mystery and humour of existence, entirely in local terms, through the conversation of two old men on a bench in the Kibble Palace.

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